EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICAS RESPONSE TOWARDS THE PROTECTION OF REFUGEES

A lot of migrants have risked their lives in crossing the Mediterranean Sea to get to the other side of the European border, some fleeing war inflicted countries, some trying to look for means of survival by eradicating poverty stricken countries and this movement towards Europe continues to take a devastating toll on human life, war, extreme violence, human right violations and persecution worldwide are prompting millions of people to be involuntarily displaced. The United Nations High Commission for Refugee (UNHCR) stated that Since the beginning of 2017, over 2,700 people are believed to have died or gone missing while crossing the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe, with reports of many others perishing en route. These risks do not end once in Europe. Those moving onwards irregularly have reported numerous types of abuse, including being pushed back across borders and so on.

Refugees are among the most vulnerable people in the world. The 1951 Refugee Convention was birthed during the World War II displacing millions of people from their homeland in search of refuge. Governments then responded by drawing up a set of international agreement to provide documents of these people who were internationally displaced, the convention was later amended by the 1967 protocol. These documents clearly spell out who is a refugee and the kind of legal protection, other assistance and social rights a refugee is entitled to receive. It also defines a refugee’s obligations to host countries and specifies certain categories of people, such as war criminals, who do not qualify for refugee status. Initially, the 1951 Convention was more or less limited to protecting European refugees in the aftermath of World War II, but the 1967 Protocol expanded its scope as the problem of displacement spread around the world.

With the increase refugee crisis categorized as a global crisis it has indeed heightened some uncertainty surrounding its political, economic and societal implications in many developed countries particularly developed countries in Europe and North America as they tend to host these refugees and asylum seekers. Host countries in this situation have been able to provide some form of care to the refugees and asylum seekers with the help of UNHCR, other developed are able to stamp refugee camps around their country in other to cater for the refugees that fit under the 1951 convention and 1967 protocol

Acceptance of refugees has been rather a win-win political and even economic gain for both the host countries and the refugees themselves. Accepting refugees is also a win for the receiving country and the communities that host them. By providing them with the right to work, to health, and to education, refugees can start productive lives in their host countries. The faster they can integrate into the labor force, the faster they can become productive members of society. Host communities have been able to benefit greatly from this refugee acceptance to their community. The main impact of this is that is has full length of safeguarding the lives of refugees and they are not necessarily a liability because they benefit greatly on the country’s economy, they even boost the economy to a maximum for instance Italy has adhered to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, whose article 14 provides that “everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.” Most times it can rather lead to a high cost in both demand and supply because of their increase they tend to cause more inflationary pressures on prices and depress wages but still they help the host country economically and so on.